

SIERRA LEONE 2/WIR PERFIN

Rosemary Smith.

One of the members of Sheffield Philatelic Society, FRANK WALTON, is also a member of the West African Study Circle and has a special interest in Sierra Leone. After mentioning to him that we have had at least three copies of the 2/WIR perfin through our auction, he has furnished me with the following information.

This first extract is from the West African Study Circle journal "Cameo" Volume 2, Page 179, July 1983 and is written by P. O. Beale.

"The only perfin known to me from Sierra Leone in the nineteenth century is that showing 2/WIR or Second West Indian Regiment. I have seen it on SG 28, the 1d stamp first issued in 1884; on SG 31, the 2½d first issued in 1891; on SG 49, the 6d issued in 1897; and on SG74, the 1d issued in 1903. It was clearly intended for security purposes to prevent the theft of stamps from the Regimental Office and their subsequent usage. I have seen three covers all bearing the 2½d value and addressed to a Mrs Duggan.

"After Sierra Leone became a Crown Colony in January 1808 the military presence consisted of The Royal Africa Corps composed almost entirely of white troops. Their severe mortality rate led to their replacement by a detachment of the West Indian Regiment which came from Barbados in April 1812 and which used Bunce Island as a recruiting depot. The men of the R.A.C. went to The Cape of Good Hope and in May 1819 five companies of the Second West Indian Regiment arrived from Jamaica to garrison Sierra Leone, the Isles of Los and The Gambia.

"The troops were supplemented for civil purposes by the Sierra Leone Police Corps founded in 1929 and later by the Frontier Police Force of 1890 formed before the Protectorate was established in 1896. This force was incorporated into the West African Frontier Force as the Sierra Leone Battalion in 1901. The need for troops in the Protectorate led to the formation of yet another military unit, the first battalion West African Regiment, which in its turn was incorporated into The West African Frontier Force. This WAFF eventually included all military units in British West Africa.

"The perfins show that the Second West Indian Regiment maintained its separate identity in Sierra Leone until the turn of this century. I would be interested to hear of any other stamps known with the perfin and of any other covers."

In the next issue of "Cameo" (June'96?), Frank Walton is going to include this additional information.

"Rosemary Smith, a member of the Perfin Society, showed me recently extracts from that society's auction lists which included an example of the ½d value from each of the two Victorian key-plates (i.e. SG 27 and SG 41), both of which are previously unrecorded by the West African Study Circle. To my knowledge there are now eight values, but details of the actual dates of use is sparse. Any further information regarding these stamps would be most welcomed."

<u>SG</u>	<u>STAMP</u>	<u>DATES RECORDED</u>
27	½d Green	
28	1d Carmine	
31	2½d Ultramarine	04 May 1896
41	½d Dull mauve & green	20 Oct 1897
45	2½d Dull mauve & ultramarine	
46	3d Dull mauve & slate	
49	6d Dull mauve	
74	1d Dull purple & rosine	

The above table is the most up-to-date listing of the known stamps of Sierra Leone perfined 2/WIR. PLEASE, if you have any of these perfins and can extend either issues or dates, do let me. Editor, know and I can pass on the information to Frank Walton. It would also help if we knew how many of these stamps are in circulation. I suspect there will be more in the hands of perfin collectors than in the hands of Sierra Leone specialists.

I know very little about the 'perfining' of these colonial stamps. I do know that the issues in question were printed typo' by De La Rue & Co. Who would perforate the 2/WIR die?

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Member BRIAN DENNIS, PO BOX 238, HILTON 3245, S.AFRICA would like to hear from anyone interested in the perfins of S.Africa and Africa.